

Solano County Facts

- The two significant portions of Solano County that are targeted for habitat restoration are Cache Slough and the Suisun Marsh.
- Of the 23,000 acres in Cache Slough that were being considered for habitat restoration, 14,500 acres are in agriculture production.
- An additional 8,000 acres may be converted under the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) Operation Criteria and Plan (OCAP) biological opinion.
- The value in 2006 of Agriculture Production of the 14,500 acres was \$7.5 million. In addition, there was about \$3.1 million in hunting related expenditures.
- Suisun Marsh containing 116,000 acres, is the largest contiguous brackish water marsh remaining on the west coast of the United States. For many years, Solano County has promoted sound land stewardship policies and practices in the Marsh.
- The Marsh provides essential habitat for more than 221 bird species, 45 animal species, 16 different reptilian and amphibian species, and more than 40 fish species.
- Solano County has a long record of protecting farmland in the Delta and other county agriculture areas. Urban development cannot be proposed in areas designated agricultural on the General Plan unless approved by voters in the county. There is no significant urban development on Delta land in unincorporated Solano County.

Solano County Supports

- The co-equal goals articulated in the draft Delta Plan if they truly result in balanced Statewide and Delta water planning actions.
- Provision of adequate freshwater flows (based on objective and well vetted scientific studies) through the Delta, with clear minimum flow requirements and protections during periods of drought.
- Comprehensive and objective analysis of an appropriately sized conveyance system and alternatives. Sizing should not exceed what is reasonably necessary so as to minimize cost to California citizens and to provide the appropriate balance between the land necessary for implementation of the water project and retention of vital and sustainable agricultural activities in the Delta region.
- Not rushing the Delta planning process just to meet statutory deadlines. There is simply too much at stake locally and statewide to make expedient decisions lacking the support of comprehensive analysis.
- Acknowledgement by the Federal and State Agencies of local government and communities in Delta areas as partners in Delta planning efforts with a well defined and meaningful role in the process.
- Recognition of the inherently sustainable nature of agriculture in the Delta due to rich soil conditions and excellent growing climate. Any Delta water project environmental analysis should consider and analyze the sustainable benefits of farming Delta lands versus the costs of shipping water to regions where farming is more resource intensive due to less favorable weather and soil conditions.
- Incorporation of clear and unequivocal provisions in various Delta Plans and agreements acknowledging the potential impacts to local Delta Communities, including establishment of processes for consultations with local agencies and full mitigation of identified impacts. The process should be established in the Delta Plan currently by the Delta Stewardship Council, with specific

implementation terms memorialized by a Memorandum of Understanding between the County and State/Federal water agencies and their contractors

- Master Planning of proposed habitat areas for each affected county prior to initiation of individual habitat projects. The goal of Master Planning would be to comprehensively evaluate how habitat areas can be sited in a compatible way with agriculture and existing land uses to minimize overall conversion of viable agricultural lands.
- Preparation of an economic analysis for each County prior to initiation of habitat projects. The economic analysis shall be utilized to determine the full range of primary and secondary environmental impacts and to provide a clear basis for full mitigation of those impacts

Specific Solano County Objectives

- **Full Mitigation for economic, social, public safety, and service impacts** of conversion of agricultural and other lands for habitat restoration purposes. Mitigation to be considered would include:
 - In lieu payments for lost property tax revenue to the County.
 - Payment of third party impacts.
 - Financial support to local agencies for staff required for Delta Planning efforts.
 - Mitigation funds to facilitate acquisition of farmland for permanent preservation (fee title or easement) at a ratio of 1.5 acres per acre converted as required by the County General Plan.
- **Protect Integrity of Levee and Flood Control System.** Introduction of habitat to restoration areas may impact the hydrology and hydraulics of an area and could be detrimental to nearby agricultural operations and other land uses. Detailed engineering analysis is necessary and appropriate mitigation must be in place to ensure the overall system is not compromised.

- **Provide adequate funding for levee maintenance.** This funding must address short and long term needs and be from a reliable source.
- **Assurance that there will be long term financial support** from Federal/State Agencies for long and short term maintenance and service obligations (including public safety) in habitat restoration areas.
- **Relief from potential future urban runoff or discharge requirements** resulting from the establishment of habitat restoration areas.
- **Extend ESA take protections** to existing agricultural operations and runoff so as to avoid potential restrictions resulting from re-introduction of rare or endangered species in newly created habitat areas.
- **Full Federal/State funding for fish screens and other environmental mitigation requirements** that might be required for local agricultural water diversions and related reclamation activities.
- **Support to manage impacts of habitat restoration over the long term.** Develop a County led effort that is sanctioned by the federal and state government to ensure that ongoing monitoring and analysis is conducted on any habitat restoration area. Policies will be developed to determine specific remedies for detrimental impacts.